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FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1944
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
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RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 4557
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2365
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 2230
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 2805
RUEABND/DEA HQS WASHINGTON DC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RHMFIUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
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SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN, EUR/ACE, INL
DUSHANBE FOR DEA
MOSCOW FOR DEA
ISLAMABAD FOR DEA
ANKARA FOR DEA
AID/W FOR EE/EA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL EAID SNAR TX AF
SUBJECT: COUNTERNARCOTICS DONORS EXCHANGE VIEWS ON PATH
AHEAD IN TURKMENISTAN

¶1. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for public Internet.

¶2. (SBU) SUMMARY: At a November 25 Mini Dublin Group meeting hosted by the Italians, donors discussed the need to continue offering practical counternarcotics training and the importance of encouraging Turkmen-Afghan cross-border cooperation. Both France and Turkey were diversifying their assistance across various GOTX law enforcement agencies, instead of focusing on the State Counternarcotics Service. Donors agreed that border and precursor control should be priorities for counternarcotics work in Turkmenistan. They also agreed to continue supporting the government's prioritization of counternarcotics and to help build capacity within Turkmenistan's law enforcement agencies. Donor consensus will solidify donor goals and increase the chances for successful implementation. For the second year in a row, the GOTX did not send a representative to the meeting. END SUMMARY.

UNODC CONTINUES ASSISTANCE TO SCNS, AND NETHERLANDS OFFERS A STUDY TOUR

¶3. (SBU) The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) said that it is working on a new technical assistance and training project for the State Counternarcotics Service (SCNS), adding that this is one of UNODC's prime partners. The representative of the Embassy of the Netherlands -- resident in Moscow -- added that his country will soon offer a study tour for three SCNS officers.

FRENCH OBSERVATIONS ON THE STATE COUNTERNARCOTICS SERVICE

¶4. (SBU) The French ambassador pointed out that the SCNS is still limited in personnel and capacity. He emphasized the agency's need for practical training, saying that the chairman of the SCNS had asked for such assistance, and warned against offering training that would be too

theoretical. He felt that training in container control would be especially useful. France was in the process of diversifying its assistance to other law enforcement agencies, such as the Border Guards. According to the ambassador, one hindrance to effective technical assistance is the reluctance of Turkmen agencies to share equipment, which means that each agency, including the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the military, would like donors to provide the same equipment to all agencies. He added that a police attach will soon fill a new position at the French Embassy.

ITALIAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO TURKMENISTAN'S FIGHT AGAINST DRUGS

15. (SBU) The representative from Italy said that his country is assisting Turkmenistan's counternarcotics efforts through financing the Central Asian Regional Information Coordination Centre (CARICC). He applauded Turkmenistan's counternarcotics activities, including the country's appointment of a liaison officer to CARICC. Italy is also offering some computer-based training for Turkmen law enforcement officers.

TURKEY SHIFTS FOCUS FROM COUNTERNARCOTICS TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

16. (SBU) The representative of Turkey said that his country is not currently offering any bilateral cooperation in counternarcotics to Turkmenistan, but it is working with Turkmenistan on general law enforcement technical assistance.

In addition, Turkey donated \$150,000 to UNODC for the Farap Border Control Checkpoint, and two Turkish experts recently

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ran a UNODC training course for 15 law enforcement officers. Turkey also helped to organize a study tour for these officers. Three Turkish experts participated in Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) training for 40 officers in Ashgabat, Serhatabat, and Artek.

OTHER COUNTRIES: INTERESTED, BUT NOT DOING MUCH

17. (SBU) Poland does not have any projects in the area of drug control or counternarcotics. The Russian representative did not come prepared to discuss his country's assistance to Turkmenistan in this area. The Japanese representative said that although his country is not offering any projects, one Turkmen officer is currently participating in a rule of law seminar for Customs officers, and another one will attend a similar seminar in February.

18. (SBU) COMMENT: Although the GOTX has stated that counternarcotics efforts are a high priority, the absence of a GOTX representative at the meeting raises a question about its openness to cooperation with donors, at least in a multilateral format. Among the attendees, there was a clear consensus that border and precursor control, which are targets of U.S. assistance, are appropriate priorities for counternarcotics work in Turkmenistan. Donors also agreed on the importance of encouraging Turkmenistan to engage and cooperate more with its neighbors, in particular Afghanistan.

END COMMENT.

MILES